

all the claims currently pending in this application, including those not presently being amended, have been reproduced below for the Examiner's convenience.

1 34. (Amended) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side,

a first lens unit of negative refractive power, located closer to the object side than any lens units of said zoom lens, said first lens unit consisting of, in order from the object side to the image side, a positive lens element, a negative lens element, a negative lens element, and a positive lens element; and

a second lens unit of positive refractive power, said second lens unit consisting of, in order from the object side to the image side, a positive lens element, a negative lens element, and a positive lens element,

wherein the separation between said first lens unit and said second lens unit is varied during zooming.

2 38. (Amended) A zoom lens according to Claim 34, wherein said first lens unit consists of, in order from the object side to the image side, a positive lens element of bi-convex form, two negative lens elements of meniscus form convex toward the object side, and a positive lens element of meniscus form convex toward the object side.

3 39. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to Claim 34, wherein said second lens unit has an aspherical surface closest to the object side.

4 40. (Amended) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side,

a first lens unit of negative refractive power, located closer to the object side than any lens units of said zoom lens, said first lens unit consisting of, in order from the object side to the image side, a negative lens element, a negative lens element, and a positive lens element, and

a second lens unit of positive refractive power, said second lens unit having a positive lens element located closest to the object side and consisting of two positive lens elements and a negative lens element,

4 wherein the separation between said first lens unit and said second lens unit is varied during zooming, and

wherein the movement locus of said first lens unit during zooming from the wide-angle end to the telephoto end includes a part which is movement to the object side.

5 41. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to Claim *40*, wherein said first lens unit consists of, in order from the object side to the image side, two negative lens elements of meniscus form convex toward the object side and a positive lens element of meniscus form convex toward the object side.

6 42. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to Claim *40*, wherein said second lens unit consists of, in order from the object side to the image side, a positive lens element, a negative lens element and a positive lens element.

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7 45. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to Claim 40, wherein said second lens unit has an aspherical surface closest to the object side.

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46. (Amended) A camera comprising:

a zoom lens;
an image pickup element provided on an image plane of said zoom lens; and
a parallel plate provided between said zoom lens and said image pickup element,

wherein said zoom lens comprises, in order from an object side to an image side, (1) a first lens unit of negative refractive power, located closer to the object side than any lens units of the zoom lens, said first lens unit consisting of, in order from the object side to the image side, a positive lens element, a negative lens element, a negative lens element, and a positive lens element, and (2) a second lens unit of positive refractive power, said second lens unit consisting of three positive lens elements and a negative lens element, wherein the separation between said first lens unit and said second lens unit is varied during zooming.

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47. (Amended) A camera comprising:

a zoom lens
an image pickup element provided on an image plane of said zoom lens; and
a parallel plate provided between said zoom lens and said image pickup element,

wherein said zoom lens comprises, in order from an object side to an image side, (1) a first lens unit of negative refractive power, located closer to the object side than any lens units of said zoom lens, and (2) a second lens unit of positive refractive power, said second lens unit consisting of, in order from the object side to the image side, a positive lens element, a positive lens element, a negative lens element, and a positive lens element, wherein the separation between said first lens unit and said second lens unit is varied during zooming.

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48. (Unamended) A camera comprising:
a zoom lens according to Claim 34; and
an image pickup element provided on an image plane of said zoom lens.

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49. (Unamended) A camera comprising:
a zoom lens according to Claim 46; and
an image pickup element provided on an image plane of said zoom lens.

Please add new Claims 51 through 55 as follows:

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51. (New) A zoom lens according to Claim 40, further comprising an
aperture stop disposed between said first lens unit and said second lens unit,
wherein said aperture stop moves independently of said first lens unit and said
second lens unit during zooming.

13 52. (New) A zoom lens according to Claim ~~40~~⁴, wherein during zooming from the wide-angle end to the telephoto end, said first lens unit and said second lens unit move toward the object side.

14 53. (New) A zoom lens according to Claim ~~40~~⁴, wherein during zooming from the wide-angle end to the telephoto end, said first lens unit and said second lens unit move toward the object side while reducing the separation between said first lens unit and said second lens unit.

15 54. (New) A zoom lens according to Claim ~~40~~⁴, wherein said first lens unit moves during focusing.

16 55. (New) A zoom lens according to Claim ~~40~~⁴, wherein said negative lens element of said second lens unit is a lens element of meniscus form concave toward the image side.--